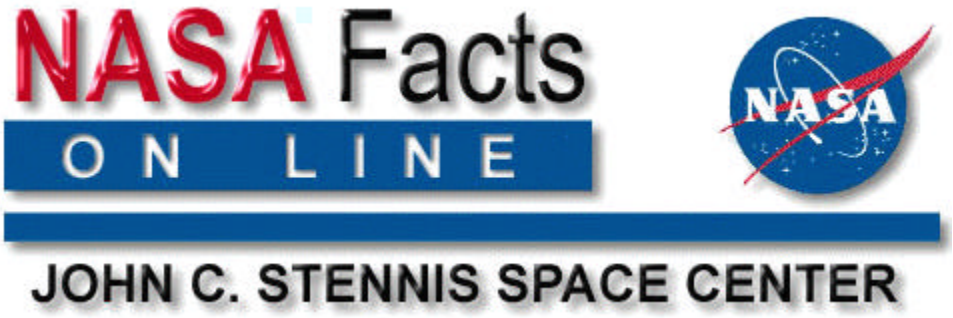

Teacher and Student Education Programs (K-12) Fact Sheet

NASA's John C. Stennis Space Center in South Mississippi offers a variety of educational services to teachers, students and the public. Stennis Space Center provides up-to-date resources and unique learning opportunities for all ages through its extensive education programs.

All education programs conducted at Stennis Space Center correspond with NASA's nationwide education goals: to capture a student's interest in science and math at an early age and maintain it; to channel more students into science and engineering careers; and to enhance teachers' skills and knowledge.

The NASA Teacher Resource Center (TRC), located in the Visitors Center, has a large collection of materials for educators, including hundreds of videotapes, computer software, printed materials and lesson plans, which reflect the most recent scientific discoveries about space, oceans and the Earth. Subjects range from science and geography to meteorology, astronomy, social studies and environmental science. The Teacher Resource Center has served more than 50,000 educators primarily from Mississippi and Louisiana since opening in 1985.

NASA education specialists at Stennis Space Center conduct staff development workshops for elementary and secondary teachers of math, science, technology and other subjects. SSC also offers specialized workshops on such topics as propulsion, remote sensing, Earth resources and meteorology. These hands-on workshops take place in the NASA Li'l Red Schoolhouse.

The Teacher Resource Center has also created the Technology, Research, Education and Discovery (TREND) 2000 computer lab in addition to offering curriculum workshops. Operated by TRC personnel, the lab s purpose is to help incorporate technology into curriculum, by providing innovative and creative classroom lesson strategies using state-of-the-art technology. Training opportunities through TREND 2000 are offered from two-hour sessions to three-week-long intensive workshops.

SSC has recently opened the FiberNet 2000 Distance Learning Center. This video teleconference center allows instructors at Stennis to simultaneously and interactively communicate with students and teachers in classrooms throughout Mississippi. The center is part of the statewide FiberNet 2000 program developed jointly between NASA, the Mississippi Department of Education and Mississippi Educational

Television.

Stennis Space Center's Tri-State Education Initiative (TSEI), created in 1991, is a "break-the-mold" approach to education. The TSEI encompasses an area within a 50-mile (80-kilometer) radius of Iuka, Miss., which includes parts of Alabama, Mississippi and Tennessee. The initiative advocates total community involvement in the education system and programs that are appropriate for people of all age groups.

The SSC Visitors Center welcomes school groups for informative field trips. In addition to guided tours, special programs geared to specific grade levels and interests are also provided. Local libraries along the Mississippi Gulf Coast and surrounding communities hold Summer Reading Programs hosted by Visitors Center personnel. Children 8 to 13 years old can also take part in one of four week-long ASTRO CAMP sessions, which encourage interest in mathematics and science.

Early Education Monday (EEM) is specifically designed to enhance the awareness of space science in children ages 3 through 6. The goal of the program is to motivate children through the excitement of space adventure and introduce them to age-appropriate scientific and mathematical concepts. The lively three-hour program includes hands-on activities, slide shows, stories and skits.

The Lower Elementary Aerospace Education Program (LEAP) is an education program designed to enhance the awareness of space science in children in grades two through four. Through the excitement of space adventure, information appropriate to this age level is presented. The "Early Education Monday" Program is specifically designed to enhance awareness of space science in preschool, kindergarten and first-grade children. It offers slide shows, stories, skits, videos, spacesuit demonstrations and tours for students.

The Intermediate Space Technology Education Program (I-STEP) is dedicated to teaching students in grades five through eight about science, technology and physics and their related principles, theories and laws. The goal of the program is to motivate students, through interactive exercises and videos, about science, math and engineering. Hands-on demonstrations and team exercises are used to aid in testing the students hypotheses and problem-solving activities and to reinforce applications of the universal law of gravity.

During the summer, elementary school teachers are chosen to participate in a two-week workshop at Stennis Space Center called NEWEST (NASA's Educational Workshop for Elementary School Teachers). During alternating summers, Stennis Space Center is host to math, science and technology teachers who have been selected for the two-week workshop called NEWMAST (NASA's Educational Workshop for Math, Science and Technology Teachers). NASA's Summer High School Apprenticeship Research Program (SHARP) selects students who live within commuting distance to Stennis to act as paid apprentices to scientists and engineers for eight weeks. They carry out assignments under the supervision of a mentor, prepare reports and participate in a variety of activities. This program is designed to attract minorities and women who are often under-represented in aerospace careers. SSC also participates in "Adopt-A-School" programs.

NASA engineers and aerospace education specialists give classroom and auditorium presentations to elementary schools, secondary schools, universities, and civic and professional organizations in local communities during National Engineers Week. In addition, SSC personnel judge science fair competitions and participate in career day activities for high school students.

For additional information about SSC's educational programs, contact the Teacher Resource Center at (601) 688-3338 or NASA's Education Programs Manager at (601) 688-1107. Call the Stennis Space Center Visitors Center at (601) 688-2370 or 1-800-237-1821 for more information about school group visits, or access the Visitors Center home page on the World Wide Web at http://www.ssc.nasa.gov (no quotes).

NASA Stennis Space Center
Public Affairs Office
Stennis Space Center, MS 39529
(601) 688-3341
pao@ssc.nasa.gov

Document: FS-SSC-018 (9612)
Modified: December 1996

 Return to Stennis Fact Sheets